

# WIPES CLOG PIPES!

Some cities are beginning to report that sewer pumps have become clogged by “flushable” wipes.

The past few years have seen the introduction of more and more disposable wipe products for a variety of household uses. Many of these products are labeled as not only disposable, but also flushable.

While marketed as convenience items, these products may potentially become a huge inconvenience because they may clog not only the sewer on your property, but also cause blockages and backup problems in a city sewer system and pump stations.

To understand how these wipes can become a problem, it’s important to know how the sewer system works. Every home has a sewer connection that runs from the home to the public sewer system. This sewer service line is the responsibility of the homeowner to maintain so there are no backups of wastewater into the home. From there, the sewage moves into larger collector lines, and pump stations help lift the wastewater across different elevations in the system.

Why are household wipes a problem? Unlike toilet paper, these products do not break down once they are flushed. They can cause blockages in your home sewer lines, resulting in the backup of sewage into the home. A repair of the service line can leave the homeowner with a nasty repair bill – often not covered by homeowner’s insurance – and an even nastier cleanup.

On a larger scale, when these products make their way into the public sewer system, they collect together and cause clogs in the collector lines and get tangled in lift pumps. When pump stations are clogged, they stop working and require cleaning and repair - or even replacement - in order to get the sewage moving again.

Avoid a nasty cleanup in your home and help protect the city sewer system by never flushing any consumer item, other than toilet paper, down the toilet, regardless of what the packaging promises. Put these items in the trash instead:

- Disinfecting wipes, baby wipes or “flushable wipes
- Cotton swabs and cotton balls
- Feminine hygiene products
- Paper towels
- Facial tissue

Not sure what should or should not be flushed? Here is an easy reminder:

**If it’s not toilet paper, it should not go in the toilet.**